



Perceptions

July/Aug 2006 · Volume 5, Issue 4

Mark Your Calendar for the 2006 Holiday Party

And, get out your dancing shoes!

Inside this issue:

New Men's Discussion Group Forming	2
Great Lakes Pride Band	2
Newsletter Editor Needed	2
Tri-City AIDS Walk	2
Holiday Party Charity	3
New Perceptions Scholarship Fund	3
Beth Rakestraw Honored	3
Ongoing Events	4
Perceptions Calendar	4

Announcing A New Feature

Pat Perception is here to answer your life questions! If you're having trouble with your lover, or your dog. Or if your lover is your dog and you're angry that you can't get married, (how did those astute conservatives find out about your desire to marry Fido anyway?). Send your questions to Pat Perception at Pat@PerceptionsSV.org

Perceptions will host the 5th Annual Holiday Party on Saturday, December 16, 2006 at Sullivan's Black Forest in Frankenmuth. Our Event will be in the Kaufmann Room on the upper level which features vaulted and beamed ceilings, a private balcony, seating for 200, a stage area and a dance floor. In addition to the featured live and silent auctions, we will have a dinner buffet and dancing. After the auctions, there's no need to rush out the door because the dance floor will be hopping and we can continue the festivities until midnight. And, we are arranging to hold a block of rooms at a local hotel, so members can make this a pre-holiday weekend get-away. Look for more information soon about special members-only discounts and additional information.

The Black Forest has hosted several Friday Night Dinners and this year's Valentine's Dance. Each and every time Perceptions has been to the Black Forest the staff has been friendly, the atmosphere was terrific, and the food was plentiful and delicious. The venue is ideally set up for our event – guests can enjoy the dancing or have a quiet conversation with friends while soaking up the view. Visit the Black Forest at www.blackforestbrewhaus.net, or better yet attend a Friday Night Dinner and check out the venue in person.

Earlier this year, the board discussed plans for this year's holiday party and reviewed the 2005 party. Attendance increased 20% in 2005 and the number of auction items increased as well. We learned the Montague was sold and the new owners are planning an addition where the tent is set up. The Montague staff could not guarantee the addition would be complete in time for the auction, nor could they guarantee the use a tent for overflow. Quite simply, without the tent, the Montague was too small of a venue for the party.

The date and location are set, but we need help with everything else! We need help with coordinating the event, contacting donors for auction items, preparing mailings, picking up auction items, and lots and lots of other things. If you are interested in helping please contact Joseph Nuncio (joe@perceptionssv.org) to volunteer. Any and all volunteers are extremely appreciated!

The Holiday Party is our signature event. Moving the event to Saturday and expanding the format to include dinner and dancing makes the event more appealing to a wider range of members. The board invites you to come and enjoy a festive evening with friends. See you there!

New Men's Discussion Group Forming

A Perceptions discussion group for gay and bisexual men will hold its first session in October. This is an opportunity for men to come together once a month to share common issues which can range from being gay in the mid-Michigan area, family or workplace issues.

While this group is NOT a mental health support group, it does provide an opportunity for men to share common experiences and offer to support to one another," says Tom Brubaker, Perceptions member.

Brubaker will coordinate and facilitate this group which will meet once a month in Saginaw. Tom is currently working on the location and date/time details. If you are interested in participating, please email Tom at ThomasinSaginaw@charter.net

GLPB would love to enlist musicians from the Tri-Cities.

The newly formed Great Lakes Pride Band (www.greatlakesprideband.org) participated in the march and played on the capitol steps for the rally at Michigan Pride in Lansing on June 24th. GLPB is an all volunteer GLBT and Allies marching band organized to play for Pride celebrations and other important community events. They have 501(c)3 not-for-profit status. GLPB meets at Lighthouse Chapel, 1501 Windsor St. in Lansing on Sundays from 4:30 to 6:30 for rehearsals. They are seeking musicians of all skill levels and other volunteers from around Michigan. GLPB is a member of Lesbian & Gay Bands of America and is mentored by the Cleveland Lesbian/Gay/Allies Concert/Marching Band. For more information call 517-644-1275 or e-mail Paul@greatlakesprideband.org

Help Wanted: Perceptions Needs A Newsletter Editor

Perceptions is in search of a new newsletter editor. If you are interested, send a letter of interest with a list of relevant skills to pboard@perceptionssv.org OR via snail mail to:

Perceptions Saginaw Valley
PO Box 1525
Midland, MI 48641

[The person who produced this newsletter is a one-time only volunteer who freely admits she's not as gifted as many of you would be!]

AIDS Walk Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for the 2nd Annual Bay City/Midland/Saginaw AIDS Walk. The walk will be on Saturday, September 30th at 10 am in Veterans Memorial Park in Bay City. Last year the 20 person Perceptions team raised almost \$2,500, this year our goal is to increase it to 30 people and \$3,000. Please consider joining the Perceptions Walk Team. For more information contact Neil@PerceptionsSV.org or go to www.aidswalkmichigan.org .

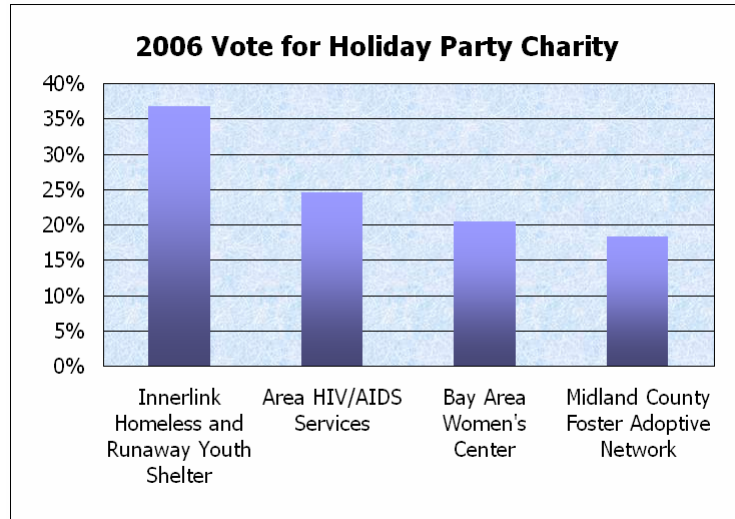


Innerlink Chosen as Charity for Holiday Party Auction

Ever since Perceptions held its first Holiday Party, we've given a portion of the proceeds from the Charity Auction to a local charity. The AIDS Care Program at BASIS was the recipient the first year. The following years we donated to Domestic Violence programs at Underground Railroad of Saginaw and Shelter House of Midland. Last Year we earmarked funds for the 2006 Tri-Cities AIDS Walk to be held this fall.

At the June Membership Meeting, the Charitable Giving Committee was formed to research several options and present their top recommendations at our July Membership Meeting. A vote was then conducted among all Perceptions Members.

The committee did an excellent job at reflecting the diversity of our interests as an L-G-B-T community and made the choice to pick just one very difficult. The chart to the right shows the results of the voting. It was a difficult decision but with almost 60% participation of the membership, *Innerlink Runaway and Homeless Youth Shelter* emerged as the winner.



Innerlink, a division of the Saginaw County Youth Protection Council established in 1973, is a fifteen bed residential facility that provides the only assistance for runaway and homeless youth in Saginaw, Tuscola, and Gratiot counties in Michigan. The program provides services to youth who have run away, are contemplating running away, homeless or have been told to leave their home. Services include crisis counseling, temporary shelter, medical care, food, transportation, educational programming and referral services.

Thank you to all who voted and special thanks to the Charitable Giving Committee for coming up with some very worthy charities.

Perceptions Scholarship Fund & Committee Announced

One of the ideas that came out of the work of the Charitable Giving Committee was to create a scholarship for local students. The idea received much interest but also some concern regarding our ability to raise the \$10,000 necessary for an endowment. The Board of Trustees has approved the formation of a fund for setting aside donations for the creation of an endowment. The Board also approved the formation of a Scholarship Committee for the purpose of raising donations for the fund. If you are interested in joining this committee contact Tim@PerceptionsSV.org.

Beth Rakestraw Honored by Triangle

Beth Rakestraw, Perceptions Vice-Chair, has been selected as a recipient of the Triangle Foundation's Catalyst Award. The award will be presented at the Triangle Foundation Annual Dinner on Sept. 30th in Dearborn, MI. The award honors people leading the fight to end violence and discrimination against GLBT persons in Michigan. **CONGRATULATIONS** Beth and thank you for all you do! For information about the dinner go to www.tri.org/events/dinner.html

Ongoing Perceptions Events

Saginaw Meet & Greet - 1st Wednesday of every month. Bambi's by Java Dave's, 4632 State Street, in the Green Acres Plaza. 7 - 9 p.m.

Midland Meet & Greet - 2nd Wednesday of every month. Espresso Milano, 137 Ashman, downtown. 7- 9 p.m.

Bay City Meet & Greet - 3rd Wednesday of every month. Gypsies, 510 Third St. 7 - 9 p.m.

Friday Night Dinner - Join Perceptions members on Friday nights for dinner at a local eatery. Each week we meet at a different restaurant for food, fun and conversation. An e-mail is sent via our Yahoo Group every week to announce the week's venue. Sign up for our e-mail list on Yahoo Groups, e-mail info@perceptionssv.org or call 989-891-1GAY.

The Womyn's Circle meets 7:30-9 p.m. on the first and third Tuesday of each month at the YWCA located at 3405 Midland Rd. in Bay City. The free, confidential support group sessions are facilitated by Mary Jo Hall, MSW, CSW, ACSW.

Anonymous and confidential HIV testing is available at The Hearth Home in Saginaw. Men who participate will receive a Meijer's gift certificate if they choose to be tested. Contact Ricardo Bowden at 989.753.9011 for further information.

Perceptions Current Events Calendar

September 1st to 4th - Camping / Cabin Weekend The Michigan Chapter of Rainbow RV invites Perceptions Members & Friends to join them for Labor Day Weekend. Dean will be hosting another Cabin Weekend in Atlanta, MI, just East of Gaylord for those looking for a fun, inexpensive weekend. As usual, we'll have room for your RV, tent or sleeping bag. There will be limited beds available in the cabin so be sure to sign up soon. We'll have the usual potluck supper on Saturday, bonfires in the evening and a good game of "Capture the Flag" that was a hit at the last Cabin Weekend. Contact Dean at UDdriver@charter.net or 989-798-2787 for more details.

Sunday, September 10th - Adopt-A-Highway Clean Up 11:30 am. Meet at the Rest Area on Southbound I-75 between the M-84 Exit and I-675. The clean up will begin at noon and should take approximately 2 hours to complete if we have about 12 volunteers. Wear old blue jeans, work boots, and bring gloves if you have them. Contact Neil@PerceptionsSV.org to volunteer or for additional information. In case of rain the clean up will be rescheduled for September 17.

Wednesday, September 13, Keyspeaker: Urvashi Vaid, Executive Director, Arcus Foundation, panel discussion and grassroots organizing effort to defeat the proposed constitutional amendment banning Affirmative Action, 7:00 p.m. Zion Lutheran Church, 143 Albany (at Woodward), Ferndale, MI, Free --Refreshments will be provided Contact **Vanessa Marr**, Civic Engagement Coordinator, at 248-398-7105 x28 or Vanessa.Marr@GoAffirmations.org

Sunday, September 17th - Unity Picnic Celebrating diversity in our community. Wenonah Park, downtown Bay City.

Thursday, September 28th - Perceptions Monthly Membership Meeting 7:00 pm. Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Midland, 6220 Jefferson Ave.

Saturday, September 30th - Triangle Foundation 12th Annual Dinner Event Ford Conference & Event Center, 1151 Village Rd., Dearborn. The evening begins at 5:00 with a Hors d'oeuvres and Cocktail Reception in The Gallery - sponsored by Paramount Bank. Your pre-dinner experience will include a fabulous Silent Auction where you can win such items as a two night stay at the Grand Hotel on Mackinac Island! At 7:00, guests will move into the Great Hall where dinner, catered by internationally renowned Opus One of Detroit, will be served. Following dinner, the program will begin with the presentation of the 2006 Catalyst Awards. For more information, or to donate to the silent auction, become a table captain, or buy tickets contact Stephanie Newman, Events Coordinator at 313-537-3323 x103 or email stephanie@tri.org

Get More Information On-Line at www.PerceptionsSV.org